

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
13 June 2002 (13.06.2002)

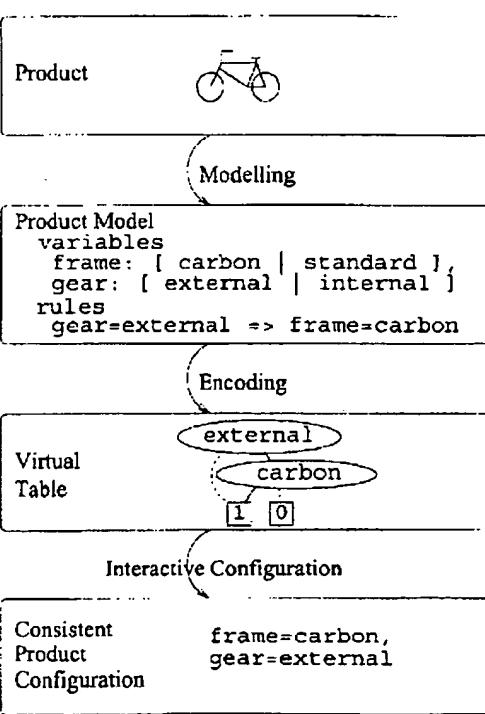
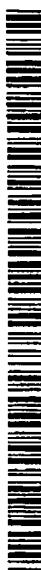
PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 02/046980 A3

- (51) International Patent Classification⁷: **G06F 17/60**
- (21) International Application Number: **PCT/DK01/00801**
- (22) International Filing Date:
30 November 2001 (30.11.2001)
- (25) Filing Language: English
- (26) Publication Language: English
- (30) Priority Data:
60/251,862 8 December 2000 (08.12.2000) US
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- (81) Designated States (national): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AT (utility model), AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, CZ (utility model), DE, DE (utility model), DK, DK (utility model), DM, DZ, HC, EL, EE (utility model), ES, FI, FI (utility model), GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, IU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, OM, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU.

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: A METHOD OF CONFIGURING A PRODUCT USING A DIRECTED ACYCLIC GRAPH



(57) Abstract: A complex product is composed of several parts, where each part may depend on the other. As a consequence of these inter-dependencies, the selection of one part might exclude other parts from being included in the finished product. A *consistent configuration* is a selection of parts where all inter-dependencies are satisfied. A computer program for computer-assisted configuration helps an end-user to make choices that will lead to a consistent product. The preferred embodiment of the present invention, *Virtual Tabulation*, is a method for keeping track of inter-dependencies a large number of parts, to allow for the construction of an efficient and exact configuration program. Such a program allows interactive configuration over networks (e.g., the Internet). Another aspect of the invention, called *Smart Search*, allows a set of inter-dependencies among parts to be computed from a product database.

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SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US,
UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

Published:

— with international search report

(84) **Designated States (regional):** ARIPO patent (GH, GM,
KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW),
Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM),
European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR,
GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent
(BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR,
NE, SN, TD, TG).

(88) **Date of publication of the international search report:**

26 September 2002

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/DK 01/00801

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 7 G06F17/60

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
IPC 7 G06F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

WPI Data, INSPEC, EPO-Internal

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	SABIN D ET AL: "PRODUCT CONFIGURATION FRAMEWORKS - A SURVEY" IEEE EXPERT, IEEE INC. NEW YORK, US, vol. 13, no. 4, 1 July 1998 (1998-07-01), pages 42-49, XP000791757 ISSN: 0885-9000 the whole document ---	1-42
Y	WO 00 13113 A (ANDERSSEN H R ET AL) 9 March 2000 (2000-03-09) page 2, line 18 - Line 25 abstract the whole document ---	1-42
		-/-

Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

Patent family members are listed in annex.

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

Date of mailing of the international search report

12 June 2002

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/DK 01/00801

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	ATTARDI G ET AL: "Web-based configuration assistants." AI EDAM ARTIF. INTELL. ENG. DES. ANAL. MANUF. vol. 12, no. 4, September 1998 (1998-09), pages 321-331, XP002902516 CAMBRIDGE UNIV. PRESS (UK) ISSN: irn-issn 0890-0604. the whole document --- 	1-9,25, 26, 32-37, 39-42
A	CHAN W ET AL: "MODEL CHECKING LARGE SOFTWARE SPECIFICATIONS" IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON SOFTWARE ENGINEERING, IEEE INC. NEW YORK, US, vol. 24, no. 7, 1 July 1998 (1998-07-01), pages 498-519, XP000781149 ISSN: 0098-5589 the whole document --- 	10-42
A	US 5 825 651 A (GUPTA N ET AL) 20 October 1998 (1998-10-20) column 2, line 50 - line 60 column 5, line 67 -column 6, line 6 abstract; figure 5 ----- 	1-9,25, 26, 32-37, 39-42

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/DK 01/00801

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